

Letter from Alexander Melville Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, October 26, 1872, with transcript

FOSSIL REMAINS.

(*To the Editor of the Globe.*)

Sir, —The discovery near Millbrook, Ontario, of the fossil remains of what must have been an animal of immense size, has created considerable interest in scientific circles.

The discovery was made on the property of Mr. R. Howden, of Millbrook, to whom I am indebted for information connected with the finding of the fossils. Mr. Howden was engaged in levelling a mound of earth on his property, when a tooth of great size and peculiar shape was thrown up by the plough. A careful search resulted in finding two more teeth similar to the first, a portion of tusk, and several pieces of leg bones. The earth immediately around the bones was quite dark, and contained large numbers of earthworms. The soil surrounding the mound is a light clay loams, and has been under cultivation for nearly forty years.

The bones (now in my possession,) prove to be the remains of the extinct mammoth, or *Elephas Americanus* of the Quaternary period.

The teeth are quite sound, and have a well-preserved grinding surface of seven and a half inches in length by three and a half inches in breadth, and measure twenty inches in circumference. Each tooth will weigh about six pounds. The portion of tusk found is well preserved, and nine inches in length by six inches in width. The pieces of leg bones are much more decayed than the teeth.

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Fossil remains of the mammoth have been discovered in widely different parts of this continent; from the extreme north to Texas. In Northern Siberia the tusks are found in such quantities as to form a not unimportant branch of commerce.

Some years ago the entire body of this species was found in Siberia embedded in the ice and frozen earth, the skin of which was dark grey, covered with thick, reddish wool, mixed with long black bristles.

In general form and size the mammoth resembled the present species; but, instead of being naked like his living relation, the mammoth was clothed with a warm coat of wool and hair, well fitted to brave a low temperature.

Yours, A. M. ROSS, M. D. Toronto, Oct. 21, 1872.

S. with LWs. Price One Cent. PROTESTANT DEAF AND DUMB INSTITUTION.

ANNUAL MEETING.

The second annual meeting and public examination of the Protestant Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, was held on Friday afternoon in McGill Normal School, Belmont street. The chair was occupied by Chas. Alexander, Esq., and among those present we noticed the Rev. Drs. Wilkes, Bancroft, Taylor, and Burns; Revs. Messrs. Chapman, Lang, Potts, Thorneloe, and Botterell; Prin. Hicks, Dr. Scott, and others.

Rev. Dr. Wilkes led in prayer, after which

The Chairman addressed the meeting. After some preliminary remarks, he said, the marked progress of the pupils has been very striking, both in their appearance and mental development. This is due to the excellent principal, Mr. Widd, who is most thorough and faithful in the discharge of his duties as a teacher; combining in his character both kindness of heart and firmness of discipline. He, together with his wife, both of whom

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are deaf mutes, conduct the institution with much satisfaction to the managers. There is also an assistant (hearing) lady teacher, who has performed her duties satisfactorily. The present number of pupils is twenty-two. There are others who would willingly come under the advantages afforded, but we must shut our doors meantime until we have funds to erect additional buildings. This we feel sorry for, but only trust that many of our wealthy citizens who have not yet helped us, may be inclined from the statement of our Principal and the Secretary and Treasurer, to sympathise with a class of our population who from no fault of theirs cannot speak for themselves. We are obliged to state that our treasury is empty at present; and in carrying on this work we throw ourselves, as managers, on the Christian liberality of the people of Montreal, and of the Province of Quebec. We urge as an additional reason for more substantial aid this fact, that the Board of Management have thought it of great importance to teach our pupils some useful trade by which, when they leave the Institution, they may provide for themselves an honest and independent means of livelihood. Of these, thus far, we have commenced two branches, viz., that of printing and carpentry. With regard to the first of these, our principal is himself a practical printer, and, we may add, a first rate one. The little handbills and programmes calling this meeting are specimens got up under his care. The second is taught by one of our pupils, who already has saved considerable to the Institution by the various articles made for its use.

The Chairman brought his remarks to a close by expressing thanks to the Giver of all Good for his care over the Institution during the past year, and during the epidemic of a terrible disease which took off hundreds.

Mr. F. MacKenzie, Sec.—Treasurer, then read the ANNUAL REPORT of the Board of Managers, which showed that at the end of June last there were 22 pupils, or seven more than at the end of the preceding school year. Two thirds of them were free pupils. Within the next two months there will be a total of 30 pupils in the Institution, or twice as many as last year, the utmost number there is room for in the Institution.

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The progress made by the pupils in their studies has been satisfactory, mainly due to the energetic and able services of Mr. and Mrs. Widd, and their assistant, Miss Bulmer; and the general good health enjoyed by the pupils is due in no small measure to the gratuitous medical services of Dr. Scott, Honorary Physician to the Institution. The Managers have been enabled by the liberality of some of the citizens of Quebec to purchase the necessary materials for printing reports, cards, notices, etc., and thus teach the pupils the very important handicraft of printing. Carpentering is still taught to the older scholars by Mr. R. Porter, who was till lately the senior pupil of the school.

The financial prospect of the Institution is far from being a bright one, as it will be seen that on the 30th of June, 1872 (the end of the fiscal year), there was a balance on hand of \$4,117.19. But \$4,000, or nearly the whole of this sum, would be used in July to pay the first half of the purchase money of the present premises of the Institution. And the liabilities and the current expenses of the Institution are such, that on the 1st of October it will not only be without funds but will be slightly *in debt*. The report wound up by drawing attention to the penniless condition of the Institution. Money was wanted for current expenses, and \$4,000, the balance of the purchase money of the property now occupied by them. The latter was rising in value to such an extent, that it was too expensive a place for occupation by a charitable institution, Moreover the present buildings were too small in every way, and the land about them too limited. The Managers propose to sell the property in a year or eighteen months, and meanwhile, to secure as soon as possible, a cheaper site elsewhere, where they would have land enough to teach the pupils agriculture, and where they could erect buildings suitable for such an institution as this is. As a proof, it need only be stated, that there are known to be 22 deaf-mutes in the Province of Quebec besides those now in this institution, and the majority of these are of proper ages for instruction. The Managers must then provide for an increased number of pupils, and can best do so in the way which they have indicated above. Land enough to teach the pupils agriculture, and buildings in which several of the leading trades could be taught, also, are very requisite. It has been well said that “the intellectual education of a deaf-mute will in many cases be a

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very doubtful advantage if we neglect to train him up in some good trade. Whereby he can support himself and gain means to indulge the aesthetic and literary tastes he acquires in an institution.” The deaf-mutes must look to trades as their only means of support.

The pupils of the Institution were then examined and in the various questions put to them displayed an amount of knowledge really wonderful. The Lords' Prayer in Pantomime was very beautiful. One feature of the meeting was the reading of an address of thanks by Master C. Butt, a semi-mute, who is in a fair way to acquire the advantages of communication by voice.

The examination, which was brought to a close by giving “God Save the Queen” in Pantomime, was very interesting and instructive, and must have convinced every one present of the good the Institution was doing.

Rev. Dr. Wilkes moved the first resolution, that the report be adopted, printed and circulated. He said there could be no question whatever that deaf — mutes could be taught, and trained for useful positions in society, and they would be recreant to their duty to God and to man if they failed to do all that in them lay to aid in their instruction. He had been very much struck with the thought that both the Principal and his wife were deaf-mutes, which showed what could be done. He hoped that they would hear no more of debt, and that the annual subscriptions would be large, and that there would be enough of money paid into the treasury to carry on the Institution and purchase a new house and land.

Rev. Gavin Lang briefly seconded the resolution, remarking that he trusted the Christian people of Montreal would realize the claims that the Institution had upon them, and unite to place it on a firmer and more extended basis.

Rev. Dr. Bancroft, in moving a vote of thanks to the Governors, Board of Management and officials of the Institution, remarked that it appeared to him that God had raised up these very persons to carry on the Institution. He spoke of the pleasure he had in witnessing

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what he had seen to-day, the pupils commencing with the "Lord's Prayer," showing their loyalty to God, and ending with "God Save the Queen," showing their loyalty to the Queen. He thought with Dr. Wilkes that they would indeed be recreant to their duty if they failed to support an institution which took hold of the deaf-mutes, and educated them for time and eternity. He rejoiced to see that the name of MacKenzie was so prominent in it, and that one-who had lately gone to a better land had left it a noble legacy.

The Rev. Dr. Taylor said he had much pleasure in seconding the resolution. They had that day evidenced that they had patient and able teachers, and that the pupils were receiving the truth. He strongly recommended the Institution to the liberality of the Christian people of the city.

After a few remarks from Principal Hicks and the Chairman, the interesting proceedings were brought to a close with prayer.

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The Deaf and Dumb. —Montreal does herself honor by the noble public charities she supports. One of the last but not least important of these, is the Protestant Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, whose second annual general meeting was held on Friday last. A report of the proceedings at that meeting we publish to-day. The report shows that already it has succeeded beyond all reasonable expectation in the face of great difficulties, so as to command public confidence and take its place in the sisterhood of charities, as entitled to the contributions of the benevolent. It is sincerely to be hoped that the Protestants of Lower Canada will come forward handsomely with contributions and place the institution in a position to do its great work efficiently. As its financial position is at present rather untoward, and there are pressing calls upon it for payments of money, the remark will be very opposite that friends will be giving twice who give quickly.